Vegetables Group
Vary your veggies

Habit #1
Vary your veggies

Eating a variety of vegetables will help your family get the nutrition they need. I serve my family different vegetables like:

Dark green – broccoli, spinach, and greens (turnip, mustard, collard).

Orange – carrots and sweet potatoes.

Starchy – corn, white potatoes, green peas.

Legumes – dry beans and peas.

Others – tomatoes, cucumbers, green beans, cabbage, celery, cauliflower, zucchini, summer squash, and lettuce.

Vegetables of different colors provide different vitamins and minerals. When I serve many colors of vegetables, I know my family is eating healthier. I needed to serve more dark green and orange vegetables.

Here is how my family does it:

Each member of my family needs about 2½ cups of vegetables a day. This was hard for me to understand. So, I got out my measuring cups and started measuring my vegetables to see what that amount looked like.

For one day, each one of us might eat:

- One half cup of cooked green beans (counts as 1/2 cup of vegetables).

- One cup of raw leafy vegetables, like lettuce or spinach (counts as 1/2 cup of vegetables).

- One half cup of raw tomatoes (counts as 1/2 cup of vegetables).

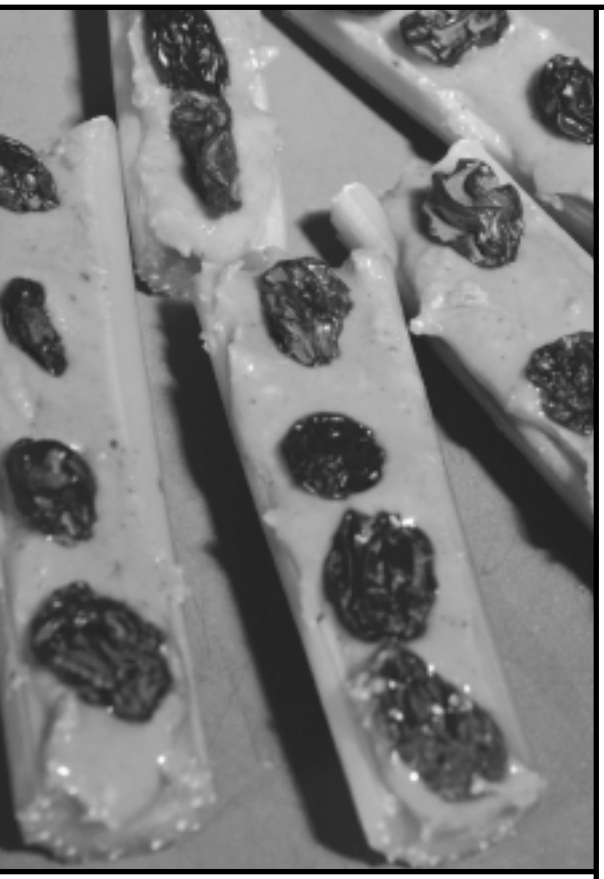
- One large baked sweet potato (counts as 1 cup of vegetables).

Tips on buying vegetables:

- Fresh, frozen, and canned vegetables are all smart choices.
- Fresh vegetables can be a great buy and taste great. Check prices and look for sales.
- Frozen and canned vegetables may cost less than fresh vegetables. Check the prices.
- Frozen and canned vegetables last longer than fresh vegetables. They can also save time – no washing and chopping.

Tips on serving vegetables:

- I can mix vegetables with other foods that my kids like. My family loves macaroni and cheese. So, I mix it with chopped broccoli for a dark green vegetable. My family never leaves a bite on their plates.
- We stir-fry vegetables like slices of zucchini, yellow squash, carrots, and onions in a nonstick pan or with a little oil. Then season to taste. Try your favorite vegetables this way.
- I serve dark green and orange vegetables often. My family likes baked sweet potatoes with cinnamon sprinkled on top.
- We keep vegetables in the refrigerator for snacks. My family likes cucumbers, carrots, and broccoli. The kids love to dip their veggies in low-fat ranch dressing or put peanut butter on their celery. They really like this recipe.



Snack
Menu

Bugs on a Log
Low-fat milk or water

Bugs on a Log

Ingredients and Instructions:

1. Make "logs" from any of these foods:
   - Celery stalks, cut about 3 inches long
   - Apples, cut in halves or quarters with cores removed
   - Carrot sticks, cut to about 3 inches long

2. Top the logs with a spread such as:
   - Low-fat cream cheese and pineapple
   - Low-fat cheese and pimento
   - Peanut butter
   - Egg salad

3. Sprinkle "bugs" on the spread:
   - Raisins
   - Unsweetened whole-grain cereal
   - Sunflower seeds
   - Chopped peanuts

Warning: Young children less than 3 years old can easily choke on nuts, seeds, popcorn, raw vegetables, grapes, peanut butter, meat sticks, and hot dogs. Do not give these foods to infants. Cut foods into small, easily chewed finger foods for toddlers and preschoolers who are still learning to bite and chew. Watch children of all ages closely when they are eating. Also, some children and adults may be allergic to peanut butter.

I add vegetables to soups and stews like this recipe:

Brunswick Stew

Serving Size: 1 cup | Makes: 8 servings

Ingredients:

- 1 tablespoon vegetable oil
- 1 medium sliced onion
- 2 cups low-sodium chicken broth
- 2 cups cooked diced chicken or turkey
- 2 cups canned or cooked tomatoes
- 2 cups canned or cooked lima beans
- 2 cups canned or cooked whole-kernel corn

Instructions:

1. Heat oil in a large pan. Add onion and cook in oil until tender.
2. Add all remaining ingredients. Bring to a simmer for 30 minutes at medium-low.

Lunch or Dinner

Menu

Brunswick Stew
Whole-wheat bread slice
Fresh orange wedges
Low-fat milk or water

Delicious Greens

Serving Size: 1/4 of recipe | Makes: 4 servings

Ingredients:

- 1/2 pound mustard or collard greens
- 2 cups shredded cabbage
- 1 tablespoon vegetable or olive oil
- 2 tablespoons minced garlic
- 1 chopped onion
- 1 tablespoon vinegar

Instructions:

1. Rinse greens, remove stems, and tear in small pieces.
2. In a large saucepan, boil 3 quarts of water.
3. Add mustard greens, return to a boil, and cook 3 minutes. Add cabbage and cook 1 more minute. Drain in colander.
4. Heat a large nonstick skillet over medium high heat. Add oil and sauté garlic and onion until light brown, about 3 minutes.
5. Add greens and vinegar and cook briefly, about 3 minutes. Serve hot.

Lunch or Dinner

Menu

Sliced ham
Delicious Greens
Baked sweet potatoes
Small piece cornbread
Pineapple slices
Low-fat milk or water

Lunch or Dinner

Menu

Colorful Quesadillas
Fruit salad
Low-fat or fat-free milk

Colorful Quesadillas

Serving Size: 4 wedges or one quesadilla | Makes: 8 servings

Ingredients:

8 ounces fat-free cream cheese

1/4 teaspoon garlic powder

8 small flour tortillas

1 cup chopped sweet red or green bell pepper

1 cup shredded low-fat cheese

2 cups fresh spinach leaves or 9 oz. frozen, thawed, and squeezed dry

Instructions:

1. In a small bowl, mix the cream cheese and garlic powder.
2. Spread about 2 tablespoons of the cheese mixture on each tortilla.
3. Sprinkle about 2 tablespoons bell pepper and 2 tablespoons shredded cheese on one half of each tortilla.
4. Add spinach: 1/4 cup if using fresh leaves or 2 tablespoons if using frozen. Fold tortillas in half.
5. Heat a large skillet over medium heat until hot. Put 2 folded tortillas in skillet and heat for 1-2 minutes on each side or until golden brown.
6. Remove quesadillas from skillet, place on platter, and cover with foil to keep warm while cooking the remainder.
7. Cut each quesadilla into 4 wedges. Serve warm.

Habit #2
Focus on fruits

Eat a variety of fruits every day. Fruits add vitamins, minerals, and fiber to our meals and snacks.

Each member of my family needs about 2 cups of fruit every day.

For one day, we might eat:

- One half cup of fruit cocktail (counts as 1/2 cup of fruit).

- A large banana (counts as 1 cup of fruit).

- A small orange (counts as 1/2 cup of fruit).

Tips on buying fruits:

- I include fresh, frozen, canned, and dried fruits like raisins on my shopping list.
- I always look for fruits on sale. Sales help stretch my food dollars.
- I always buy 100% juice and not fruit drinks. Fruit drinks might not have any fruit juice in them. They are mostly sugar. My nutrition educator told me how to tell if a drink is 100% fruit juice by looking at the food label.

Tips on serving fruits:

- My family likes fruit juice, but I might not serve it every day. We only drink enough juice to get up to half of the fruit we need for the day when we have juice. For my family, that would be no more than 1 cup per person.
- I keep a bowl of fruit like apples, oranges, and bananas on the kitchen counter for quick snacks.
- We often use fruit for dessert. Our favorites are:
  - Canned peaches, fruit cocktail, pineapple, and applesauce.
  - Mangoes, papayas, cantaloupes, strawberries, watermelons, grapes, and blueberries when they are on sale.

Here is a great recipe to try as a snack or dessert.

Snack
Menu

Frozen Fruit Cups
Graham cracker
Low-fat or fat-free milk

Frozen Fruit Cups

Serving Size: 1 muffin tin cup | Makes: 18 servings

Ingredients:

3 bananas

24 ounces fat-free strawberry yogurt

10 ounces frozen strawberries, thawed, with the juice

8 ounces canned crushed pineapple, with the juice

Instructions:

1. Line 18 muffin-tin cups with paper baking cups.
2. Dice or mash bananas and place in a large mixing bowl.
3. Stir in remaining items.
4. Spoon into muffin-tin cups and freeze at least 3 hours or until firm. Remove frozen cups and store in a plastic bag in freezer.
5. Before serving, remove paper cups and let stand 10 minutes.

Habit #3
Get your calcium-rich foods

Each of my family members needs 3 cups of milk or milk products each day to get enough calcium.

For one day, we might:

- Drink 1 cup of low-fat milk or put it on our cereal for breakfast (counts as 1 cup of milk).

- Drink 1 cup of fat-free or low-fat milk for lunch (counts as 1 cup of milk).

- Eat 1 cup of low-fat yogurt as dessert at our evening meal (counts as 1 cup of milk).

On other days for one of the cups of milk, we might eat 2 ounces of low-fat processed cheese.

Tips on buying milk and milk products:

- My family switched from whole milk to fat-free milk. We did not need the extra fat in whole milk. We changed a little at a time. First, we switched from whole to reduced-fat (2%) milk. Later, we changed to low-fat or fat-free milk. Now, that's all we drink.
- We also eat fat-free or low-fat cheese and yogurt. I feel great knowing that my family is making healthy choices.

Tips on serving milk and milk products:

- One of my kids cannot drink milk. The doctor told me he is lactose intolerant. The nutrition educator showed me other items I can serve, like lactose-free milk and calcium-fortified foods such as calcium-fortified orange juices, soy/rice drinks, and cereals.
- I read labels carefully to make sure I'm buying calcium-fortified foods.
- I use fat-free or low-fat milk, yogurt, and cheese in foods that I make.

Try these recipes to get calcium-rich foods in your meals.

Orange Banana Frosty

Serving Size: 1/2 cup | Makes: 2 servings

Ingredients:

1 small frozen banana, cut into chunks

1/2 cup plain low-fat yogurt

1/2 cup orange juice

Instructions:

1. Put all ingredients in a blender and mix well.
2. Add more liquid if you want the drink thinner.

Snack
Menu
Orange Banana Frosty

Sure To Please Baked Eggs and Cheese

Serving Size: 1/4 of recipe | Makes: 4 servings

Ingredients:

- 1 tablespoon oil
- 6 eggs*
- 1/2 cup fat-free milk
- 1/2 cup low-fat grated cheese
- 1 teaspoon garlic powder
- 1½ teaspoons oregano

Instructions:

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees.
2. Put oil in a medium baking dish or small cake pan and heat in the oven for a few minutes.
3. In a bowl, beat eggs. Mix in remaining ingredients. Pour into hot pan.
4. Bake 20 minutes or until eggs are firm. Serve immediately.

* 4 eggs plus 4 egg whites may be used instead of 6 eggs to reduce fat and cholesterol.

TIP: This recipe does not have to be just for breakfast. Consider using this recipe as a main dish at lunch or supper.

Breakfast

Menu

Sure To Please Baked Eggs and Cheese

Whole-wheat toast

100% fruit juice

Habit #4

Make half your grains whole

We usually eat enough foods from the grains group like bread, cereal, rice, and pasta. My family needs to eat 6 ounces of grains each day. Three of those ounces should be whole-grain. My trusty measuring cups help me serve the right amount.

For one day, we might eat:

- One cup of cereal (whole-wheat flakes) (counts as 1 ounce of whole grains).

- Two slices of whole-wheat bread for our lunch sandwich (counts as 2 ounces of whole grains).

- One cup of cooked rice at our evening meal (counts as 2 ounces of grains).

- One small piece of corn bread at our evening meal (counts as 1 ounce of grains).

Tips on buying grains:

- At least half (3 ounces for my family) should be whole grains. This was new to me. I thought if the bread was brown, it was whole-grain. That is not always true. I learned to look on the label for the words 100% whole grain, or 100% whole wheat. If you see any of these words listed first on the label, it contains whole grain.
- You can save money by shopping for grains at day-old bread stores. Ask your nutrition educator if there is one in your area that accepts food stamps.

Tips on serving grains:

- Some whole grains that my family likes are whole-wheat breads and cereals, oatmeal, popcorn, brown rice, and whole-wheat or whole-grain corn tortillas.
- I put grains in many of the recipes I fix. Here are some fun, delicious recipes that make using whole grains really easy.

Fantastic French Toast

Serving Size: 1/6 of recipe | Makes: 6 servings

Ingredients:

2 eggs

1/2 cup fat-free milk

1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract

6 slices whole-wheat bread

Light syrup or fruit toppings (optional)

Instructions:

1. Preheat the griddle over medium heat, or set an electric frying pan at 375 degrees.
2. Put eggs, milk, and vanilla in a shallow bowl and beat with a fork until well mixed.
3. Grease the griddle or pan with a thin layer of oil or use nonstick spray.
4. Dip both sides of bread, one slice at a time, in the egg mixture, and cook on the hot griddle or frying pan.
5. Cook on one side until golden brown. Turn the bread over to cook the other side. It will take about 4 minutes on each side.

Breakfast

Menu

Fantastic French Toast
Light syrup
Applesauce
Low-fat or fat-free milk

Lunch or Dinner
Menu

Spinach and
Meat Cakes

Brown rice

Green salad with
low fat dressing

Strawberries or
red grapes

Low-fat or fat-free milk

Spinach and Meat Cakes

Serving Size: 2 meat cakes | Makes: 6 servings

Ingredients:

1 pound ground beef or turkey, 7% fat (or 93% lean)

2 spinach bunches, washed and cut into pieces (may substitute a 1-pound bag of frozen chopped spinach, thawed and well drained)

1/2 finely chopped onion

2 minced garlic cloves

1/2 teaspoon salt

black pepper to taste

3 cups cooked brown rice

Instructions:

1. Preheat frying pan (no oil).
2. Combine all ingredients except brown rice in a large mixing bowl. Mix well.
3. Form mixture into 12 small balls. Place in frying pan and flatten into patties using a spatula.
4. Cook over medium heat until cooked on both sides.
5. Serve over cooked brown rice.

Banana Split Oatmeal

Serving Size: whole recipe | Makes: 1 serving

Ingredients:

1/3 cup quick-cooking dry oatmeal

1/8 teaspoon salt

3/4 cup very hot water

1/2 sliced banana

1/2 cup fat-free frozen yogurt

Breakfast **Menu**

Banana Split Oatmeal

1/2 Whole-wheat English muffin

Low-fat or fat-free milk

Instructions:

1. In a microwave-safe cereal bowl, mix together the oatmeal and salt. Stir in the water.
2. Microwave on high for 1 minute. Stir. Microwave on high power for another minute. Stir again.
3. Microwave an additional 30-60 seconds on high power until the cereal reaches the desired thickness. Stir again.
4. Top with banana slices and frozen yogurt.

TIP: The banana split oatmeal can also be a snack by itself.

Habit #5:
Go lean with protein

The Meat and Beans Food Group gives us protein. We need protein every day. Each member of my family needs 5½ ounces from the meat and beans group each day. I had a hard time learning ounces. But my nutrition educator showed me how.

For one day, we might eat:

- One whole egg (or one tablespoon of peanut butter) at breakfast (counts as 1 ounce of meat and beans).

- 1/2 cup cooked black beans at lunch (counts as 2 ounces of meat and beans).

- One half of a small chicken breast (counts as 2 to 3 ounces of meat and beans).

Tips on serving protein foods:

- It helped me to start using my measuring cups and spoons. I learned that eating 1 cup of beans would equal 4 ounces of meat. That helped me judge how much food from the Meat and Beans group my family eats.
- I take the skin off my chicken and trim the fat off meats.
- I bake, microwave, or broil our meats. This was a big change. I used to fry a lot of our foods.
- I often serve other protein foods like cooked dry beans and peas, fish, nuts, and eggs.

Tips on buying protein foods:

- I buy low-fat or lean meats and poultry (chicken and turkey). They have less fat.
- I use more fish. I buy fresh fish when it is on sale or canned tuna or salmon. Canned fish usually costs less.

Try these low-cost recipes:

Lunch or Dinner

Menu

Salmon Patties
Oven Fries
Broccoli
Peaches
Low-fat or fat-free milk

Salmon Patties

Serving Size: 1 patty | Makes: 9 servings

Ingredients:

15½ ounces canned, drained salmon
1 cup crushed whole-grain cereal or crackers
2 lightly beaten large eggs
1/2 cup low-fat milk
1/8 teaspoon black pepper
1 tablespoon vegetable oil

Instructions:

1. Use a fork or clean fingers to flake salmon until very fine.
2. Crumble cereal or crackers into crumbs.
3. Add cereal or cracker crumbs, eggs, milk, and pepper to salmon.
4. Mix thoroughly.
5. Shape into 9 patties.
6. Heat oil in a skillet.
7. Over medium heat, carefully brown both the sides until patty is thoroughly cooked.

Tip: Replace the salmon with canned tuna fish. For fun, do a combination of the two!

Bean Enchiladas

Serving Size: 2 enchiladas (6 inches each) | Makes: 4 servings

Ingredients:

3½ cups cooked pinto beans
(or two 15-oz cans of low-sodium pinto beans)

1 tablespoon chili powder

1/2 cup low-fat shredded cheese, such as Monterey Jack

8 6-inch flour tortillas

Salsa (optional)

Instructions:

1. Place beans in a large bowl and mash coarsely with a fork or potato masher; stir in chili powder.
2. Wrap tortillas in a damp paper towel. Microwave on HIGH for 45 seconds, or until tortillas are soft and warm.
3. Divide bean mixture among tortillas and spread down center of tortilla. Sprinkle cheese on bean mixture.
4. Roll tortillas to enclose mixture.
5. Spray a 9-inch x 13-inch baking dish with nonstick cooking spray.
6. Place enchiladas, seam side down, into baking dish.
7. Cover with foil and bake at 350 degrees for 20 minutes or until heated through.
8. Serve warm with salsa.

Lunch or Dinner

Menu

Bean Enchiladas

Lettuce and tomato salad

Pears

Low-fat or fat-free milk

Lunch or Dinner

Menu

Sensational
Six-Layer Dinner

Whole-wheat
bread slice

Fruit cocktail

Low-fat or
fat-free milk

Sensational Six-Layer Dinner

Serving Size: 1/6 of recipe | Makes: 6 servings

Ingredients:

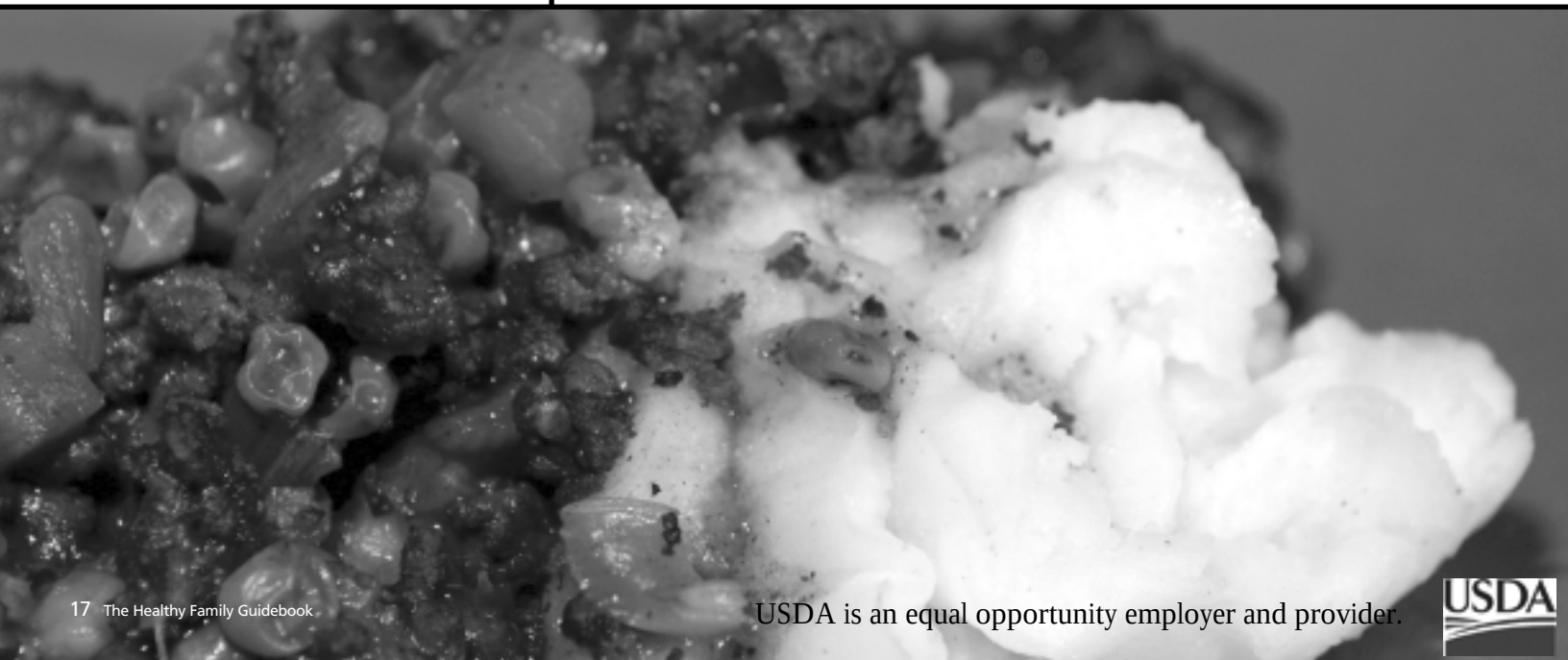
- 2-3 raw, sliced potatoes (medium size)
- 2 cups sliced carrots
- 1/4 teaspoon black pepper
- 1/2 teaspoon onion, sliced
- 1 pound lean ground beef, browned and drained
- 1½ cups green beans
- 1 can of tomato soup

Baking dish: Use a baking dish or pan large enough to fit all recipe items.

Variation: Use peas or corn instead of green beans. Use your favorite cream soup instead of tomato soup.

Instructions:

1. Lightly oil or spray baking dish with cooking spray.
2. Layer ingredients in order given. Cover.
3. Bake at 350 degrees for 45 minutes or until tender and thoroughly heated.
4. Uncover and bake 15 more minutes.



Habit #6

Watch your fats, sugar, and salt (sodium)

I thought all fats were bad for you. But some types of fats are okay in the right amounts. I learned the fats I should use are oils like:

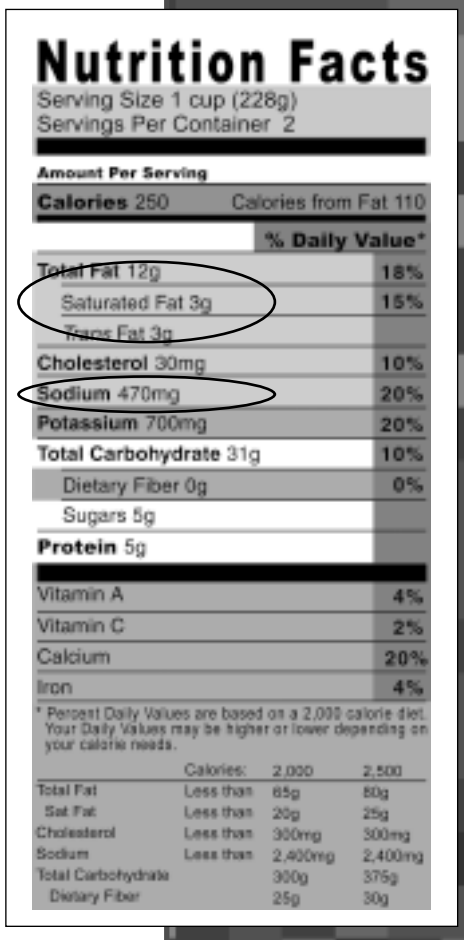
- Canola oil
- Corn oil
- Olive oil
- Soybean oil
- Safflower oil
- Sunflower oil
- Oils in fish, nuts, and seeds

Some types of fats are better to limit. These fats are:

- Butter
- Lard
- Stick margarine
- Fat on meats and poultry
- *Trans* fats that are in a lot of prepared foods like some cakes, cookies, crackers, pies, donuts, stick margarines, fried foods, chips, and solid vegetable shortening.

The nutrition educator helped me learn how to read the Nutrition Facts label to see what was in the food I bought.

- I learned to eat small amounts of fat, even oils. They are high in calories.
- I also watch the sugar my family gets. I pick food and drinks that are low in sugar. Sugars add calories to foods and not much else that we need. Some foods that are often high in sugars are sodas, candies and sweets, and fruit drinks.
- One other thing I check on the Nutrition Facts label is the amount of sodium (salt). I try to buy canned foods that are low in sodium.



Nutrition Facts

Serving Size 1 cup (228g)
Servings Per Container 2

Amount Per Serving

Calories 250	Calories from Fat 110
	% Daily Value*
Total Fat 12g	18%
Saturated Fat 3g	15%
Trans Fat 3g	
Cholesterol 30mg	10%
Sodium 470mg	20%
Potassium 700mg	20%
Total Carbohydrate 31g	10%
Dietary Fiber 0g	0%
Sugars 5g	
Protein 5g	
Vitamin A	4%
Vitamin C	2%
Calcium	20%
Iron	4%

* Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your Daily Values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs.

	Calories:	2,000	2,500
Total Fat	Less than	65g	80g
Sat Fat	Less than	20g	25g
Cholesterol	Less than	300mg	300mg
Sodium	Less than	2,400mg	2,400mg
Total Carbohydrate		300g	375g
Dietary Fiber		25g	30g

Habit #7

Balance what you eat with physical activity

Eating healthier foods is important, but I also learned that we need to be physically active. I learned that:

Kids need at least 60 minutes of physical activity every day or most days of the week.

Adults need to be physically active for at least 30 minutes most days of the week.

You may need more physical activity to lose weight or maintain your weight at a healthy level. If you have questions about what is right for you, go to www.mypyramid.gov.

Physical activity should be at least moderate-intensity like these activities:

- Walking briskly
- Gardening/yard work
- Dancing
- Bicycling

I like being more physically active because I feel better about myself. I also have more energy. I walk on most days, and it has helped me to handle my busy family. Walking is great for most people.

One of the secrets to health for our families is to balance how much we eat and how physically active we are. We need to use up what we take in. This means burning off some of the calories we take in.

Being physically active helps everyone in your family. Even if our families are busy, there are many ways for all of us to be active.

Try these:

- Walk or play together.
  - Walk in an area that is comfortable for you like in the neighborhood, at a park, or in the mall.
  - Walk to school with your kids.
  - Walk to the store when you need only a few things.
  - Play with your children – basketball, soccer, or chase each other in a game of tag.
- Check with your local community center for exercise programs, dance classes, or other activities.
- Join a church group that does physical activities.
- Take the stairs, not the elevator.
- Park as far away from stores as you can, so you will add walking steps to your day.
- If the weather is bad, we turn on the music and dance or march around the house. The kids love this. I love it too. It gets all of us moving and away from the television.

No matter what you choose to do, get moving. The more you move, the better you feel, and the healthier you will be.